

Apply today and you could be...

A Surgeon at the Ntchisi District Hospital in Malawi

What's the context and purpose of the role?

Although Malawi has had some successes on its way to the Millennium Development Goals, the country still faces challenges on several fronts with major problems in maternal mortality, high HIV and AIDS prevalence rates, gender inequality and hunger. Malawi currently has an acute shortage of qualified medical doctors and VSO is supporting the Ministry of Health in its emergency programme aiming to tackle the human resource crisis in the health sector. As a volunteer at the Ntchisi District Hospital you'll help address some of these problems by using your expertise to plan and conduct surgical care provision as well as teach and supervise local medical students.

What does the role involve?

- Assisting the Head of Department in planning surgical care provision
- Conducting surgical assessments, routine and emergency surgical treatment as well follow up of patients through specialist clinics
- Teaching and supervising medical students
- Assisting the Head of Department and Ministry of Health in developing, revising and monitoring surgical care standards



What skills, experience and personal qualities are needed for the role?

You'll need to be a qualified surgeon with at least three years' surgical experience. Knowledge of tropical medicine is useful but not essential. The role requires a flexible and adaptable approach as well as excellent relationship building and problem solving skills. Ntcheu is one of the better resourced hospitals in Malawi, but you'll need to be patient and creative and have the ability to work independently with limited resources.

And the rest...

The name Malawi means 'reflected light' or 'bright haze', a rather suitable description of this land-locked country whose area is one-fifth covered in water. Magnificent Lake Malawi is Africa's third largest lake with astounding sub-aqua life - it can feel a bit like snorkelling in an aquarium! The dry season is winter, between May and October when it can be quite cold at night. October to December is the hot dry season, when temperatures can rise to over 40° C in some areas. Malawi is fortunate in having quite a variety of food available all year around. Many volunteers have their own gardens and it's well worth growing some of your own vegetables to ensure a balanced and nutritious diet.